



Incorporating any amendments approved at subsequent Board meetings

Minutes of Board Meeting 26 February 2020

<i>Present</i>	Provost (Dr P J Prendergast), Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer (Professor J Barkhoff), Registrar (Professor P Murphy), Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies (Professor K Mitchell), Bursar/Director of Strategic Innovation (Professor V Campbell), Professor D Ahern, Professor S Alyn Stacey, Ms L Beston, Professor L Brennan, Ms J Donoghue, Ms S Farrell, Professor D Faas, Dr D Fayne, Mr D Grouse, Ms A Leen, Ms N McCay, Professor R Moss, Professor B O'Connell, Professor E O'Halpin, Ms S Oye, Professor D R Phelan, Professor A Seery, Professor F Sheerin.
<i>Apologies</i>	Professor A Burke, Professor K McTiernan, Vice-President for Global Relations (Professor J Hussey).
<i>In attendance</i>	Assistant Secretary to the College (Ms V Butler).
<i>(ex officio)</i>	Secretary to the College (Mr J Coman), Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer (Mr P Reynolds).
<i>(by invitation)</i>	Chief Operating Officer (Ms G Ruane).

SECTION A

BD/19-20/147 Statement of Interest

The Secretary to the College advised that he had received a statement of potential conflict of interest from Professor Phelan in relation to agenda item A.9 Visitors. The Secretary to the College, having discussed the matter with Professor Phelan, suggested, and it was agreed, that Professor Phelan would leave the meeting for the discussion on this item.

The Secretary to the College also advised that he had received a statement of potential conflict of interest from the Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer in relation to agenda item D.26: Nominations for Appointment. The Secretary to the College, having discussed the matter with Mr Reynolds, suggested, and it was agreed, that Mr Reynolds would leave the meeting for the discussion on this item.

BD/19-20/148 Minutes

The draft minutes of the meeting of Board of 29 January 2020 were approved and signed. Following comments from a Board member in relation to the phrasing of the minutes, the Secretary to the College agreed to review the format of future sets of minutes.

BD/19-20/149 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

BD/19-20/150 Provost's Report

The Provost provided an update to Board members under the following headings:

(i) Legislative Proposals

The Provost noted the uncertainty in respect of the proposed legislative changes to legislation relating to University governance and the remit of the Higher Education Authority (HEA) arising from the Government formation process. The Provost is to meet with the Secretary General to the Department of Education and Skills and will provide an update at the next meeting of the Board.

(ii) Accommodation Licence Fees

The Provost advised that he had met with Mr Eoin Ó Broin T.D., Spokesperson on Housing, Sinn Féin, to discuss the matter of student accommodation and the associated licence fees.

(iii) Coronavirus

The Provost invited the Director of the College Health Centre, Dr David McGrath and the Chief Risk Officer, Ms Julia Carmichael to join the meeting to provide Board members with an update in respect of the outbreak of the Coronavirus.

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer advised the Board that the Covid-19 Working Group was established in January 2020 to bring relevant stakeholders together to agree actions relating to the Coronavirus. He provided details of the membership of the Working Group, noting that it was meeting regularly, following up on actions in respect of student and staff welfare and issuing updates to staff and students. He noted that, presently, most concerns regarding direct recruitment are related to students coming from China. The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer advised that the Group is adhering to the guidance of the Health Service Executive and the Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) and is acting in keeping with the advices of Department of Foreign Affairs, World Health Organisation and other international agencies. The group is currently dealing with matters such as the situation of students on Erasmus or unable to take up their semester abroad studies, the impact on student recruitment, especially from Asia and planning for potential impacts on teaching and learning here. He also advised that the Chief Risk Officer is reviewing the Trinity Emergency Response Plan and scenario planning.

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer also advised that a dedicated webpage went live on 31 January 2020 and that there is a prominent link to the Coronavirus webpage on the Trinity home page. He concluded by advising Board members that the Covid-19 Working Group will continue to keep the situation under review, is prepared to react as the situation evolves and will keep Board informed of developments.

Dr McGrath advised that, to date, there had been 90 tests conducted in the country and that all had returned as negative for the virus, however the situation was developing with a significant increase in the number of cases in Northern Italy being observed. Dr McGrath advised Board members that it is likely that clusters of cases will soon be identified in Ireland and that actions to mitigate the spread is crucial. He noted that the virus may be less likely to spread in the summer months and as such the next six to eight weeks will be critical. Dr McGrath also informed Board members that plans were being developed in consultation with the HSPC in respect of students from Singapore Institute of Technology who are due to travel to Trinity for teaching and hospital placements.

Responding to comments from a Board member in respect of a risk to the supply of resources to the university, the Chief Risk Officer advised that in preparation for Brexit a detailed list of suppliers and possible alternative suppliers had been compiled. She also advised that emergency planning has been given priority and that appropriate training for those involved will be delivered in the coming weeks.

In response to comments from a Board member noting the importance of the use of hand sanitisers, Dr McGrath informed the Board that hand sanitisers had been made available across the campus at the start of this process and that the number of physical units had been increased in recent days.

In response to a query from a Board member, Dr McGrath clarified that at present there was no blanket ban on travel but there were restrictions in place for some countries. In response to comments from a Board member regarding clinical placements, it was noted that the Covid-19 Working Group would consider the matter.

The Chief Risk Officer concluded by noting the importance of good communication and the sharing of information in assisting the planning process.

Dr McGrath and Ms Carmichael left the meeting at this point.

BD/19-20/151

Planning Group Report #21

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer introduced this item with reference to his presentation dated 26 February 2020 and his memorandum dated 19 February 2020 which had been circulated in advance. He gave Board members an overview of the work programme priorities of the Planning Group from September 2019 to February 2020 which included the finalisation and launch of the Strategic Plan, the University Budget for 2019/20 and a review of the Baseline Budgeting Model (BBM). He also provided the Board with an update on the HEA Human Capital Initiative, the ongoing monitoring of finances,

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student numbers and staffing levels.

In response to comments from a Board in relation to the Section of the Report regarding ECF staffing, the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer clarified that the Planning Group had used its delegated authority from the Board to regularise an anomaly that existed for Trinity in relation to pension provision, arising out of the Employment Control Framework. It was agreed that an update on this matter would be provided under Matters Arising by the Chief Operating Officer at the next meeting of the Board.

In response to a query from a Board member in respect of the Casual Pay Policy, the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer advised that the Policy is to come before the Board for approval and clarified that the Planning Group had approved the use of bands in the rates of pay for those on the casual payroll and had not discussed in any way specific rates..

Responding to comments from a Board member, the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer advised that the matter of Schools meeting the costs of staff recruitment in their respective schools had not been raised as an issue with him during consultation with the Heads of School.

In response to queries from Board members, the Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer, noting the priorities as specified in the Strategic Plan, advised that the goal to reduce the Staff: Student ratio does have financial implications and that these had been fully costed.

Following further queries from Board members in respect of the Casual Pay Policy, the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer clarified that the Casual Pay Policy had been drafted with a view to regularising the existing anomalies in practice across the schools. The Provost also clarified that the intention of the policy was to introduce defined bands for rates of pay. The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer further clarified that the Policy reflects the practice whereby it is the decision of the Head of School or Head of Discipline, as appropriate, as to the type of work performed by individuals on the casual payroll.

Action/Decision

151.01 The Board considered and approved the memorandum from the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer, dated 19 February 2020, and the accompanying Planning Group Report.

151.02 It was agreed that an update on the ECF staffing matter would be provided under Matters Arising by the Chief Operating Officer at the next meeting of the Board.

BD/19-20/152 University Budget: Financial Year 2020

The Provost welcomed the Financial Planning and Risk Manager (FSD), Mr Keith Creedon to the meeting.

The Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer introduced this item with reference to his memorandum, dated 19 February 2020, which had been circulated in advance. He provided Board members with an overview of the timeline which had been followed in the preparation of the budget for year ending 30 September 2020. Summarising the budget and the associated income and expenditure levels, the Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer also presented the underpinning assumptions, stating that the possible impact of the Coronavirus was not yet known.

The Provost thanked the Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer and opened the item for discussion.

Responding to comments from a Board member in respect of potential risks to the projected income levels, the Provost noted the significant drop in income which would be incurred should the student registration fee be abolished. The Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer clarified that if income levels reduce then costs would also need to reduce to reflect that.

Professor Phelan left the meeting at this point.

In response to comments from a Board member in respect of the potential risks associated with having a firm target for the staff: student ratio, the Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer advised that the planned reduction in the ratio could be challenging but that it is in keeping with the overall ambitious vision of the new Strategic Plan.

Action/Decision

152.01 The Board considered and approved the memorandum from the Financial Planning and Risk Manager (FSD) dated 19 February 2020 and the budget for year ending 30 September 2020.

Mr Creedon left the meeting at this point.

BD/19-20/153 Board Review Working Group - Update

The Secretary to the College introduced the item with reference to the memorandum from the Chair of the Board Review Working Group and himself, dated 19 February 2020, which had been circulated in advance. He provided Board members with an update of the progress in the work of the Board Review Working Group. He also advised the Board that further to discussions at its meeting on 29 January 2020 (BD/19-20/131 refers), the draft Governance “Values and Principles” document had been amended and was before Board members for approval.

It was noted that a meeting between the Provost and the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills to explain the rationale for the current review of governance in Trinity is due to take place on 2 March 2020. The Registrar and the College Secretary had a useful technical briefing meeting on 6 February 2020 with officials from the Department of Education and Skills responsible for preparing the next draft of the legislative proposals on higher education governance and oversight. Key aspects of the proposed draft legislation are still being worked on following the recent public consultation process. It is expected that the draft Heads of Bill will be published in Q3, 2020.

Responding to a query from a Board member and following some discussion regarding the wording used in Governance Value number 6 in the “Values and Principles” document, it was agreed that no further amendments are required.

In response to comments from a Board member regarding the detailing of the level of engagement as drafted in Governance Principle number 8, it was agreed that the wording be amended so that it would read as follows: ‘The governance system engages effectively with internal and external stakeholders...’.

Action/Decision

153.01 The Board considered and approved the memorandum from the Chair of the Board Review Working Group and the Secretary to the College, dated 19 February 2020.

153.02 The Board noted the further update on progress from the Board Review Working Group and approved the amended draft Governance “Values and Principles” document, pending overall agreement on the output of the Working Group, in line with its Terms of Reference, by the end of the academic year 2019/2020.

BD/19-20/154 Senior Academic Promotions Call 2019

The Provost introduced this item with reference to his memorandum dated 17 February 2020 which had been circulated in advance. He advised the Board of the proposed financial envelope for the Senior Academic Promotions round 2019 and asked Board members to approve the relevant amount.

In response to comments from a Board member where it was noted that there is no process for promotion of Professional Staff, it was noted that the Director of Human Resources was liaising closely with the staff representative bodies and it was agreed that an update on the Role Grading Policy is to be brought to the next meeting of the Board.

Responding to a query from a Board member, the Provost clarified that quotas were not being used in the Senior Academic Promotions process.

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer, responding to a query from a Board member, provided Board members with a summary of the number of promotions awarded by grade in the previous round of Senior Academic Promotions.

Action/Decision

154.01 The Board approved the memorandum from the Provost dated 17 February 2020.

154.02 It was agreed that an update on the Role Grading Policy is to be brought to the next meeting of the Board.

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The dissent of Mr Grouse was noted.

- BD/19-20/155 Fellowship 2020**
The Board approved the nominations for Fellowship and Honorary Fellowship as presented by the Provost. The Board also approved the memorandum from the Registrar dated 19 February 2020 which had been circulated in advance.
- BD/19-20/156 Visitors**
The Board received the verbal update as provided by the Secretary to the College.
- BD/19-20/157 University Council**
The Board noted and approved the draft Acta of the Council meeting of 12 February 2020.
- BD/19-20/158 Any Other Urgent Business**
There were no other items of urgent business.

SECTION A.2

- BD/19-20/159 Policy on Externally Contracted Service Providers**
A Board member commented that the planned expansion of Executive Education in the School of Business might require amendment to the Policy and it was agreed to consult in detail with the Dean of the Business School. It was also agreed to bring the Policy before the Audit Committee.
- This item was deferred to a future meeting of the Board.

SECTION B

- BD/19-20/160 Board Business**
- (i) Callover**
The Board noted the callover updated to 29 January 2019.
- (ii) Outcomes**
The Board noted the Board outcomes from the meeting of 29 January 2019.
- BD/19-20/161 Audit Committee**
This item was deferred to a future meeting of the Board.
- BD/19-20/162 Estates Policy Committee**
The Board noted and approved the draft minutes of 21 June, 4 October and 2 December 2020.
- BD/19-20/163 Equality Committee**
The Board noted and approved the draft minutes of 21 January 2020.
- BD/19-20/164 Finance Committee**
The Board noted and approved the draft minutes of 4 February 2020.

SECTION C

- BD/19-20/165 E3 Learning Foundry: Independent Monitor Candidate**
The Board considered and approved the Memorandum from the Bursar, dated 18 February 2020.
- BD/19-20/166 Senate Business – Recommendation for the Award of the Degree MA (*jure officii*)**
The Board noted and approved the Memorandum from the Registrar, dated 19 February 2020.
- BD/19-20/167 Committee on Student Conduct and Capacity**

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The Board noted and approved the Memorandum from the Registrar, dated 19 February 2020.

BD/19-20/168 Trinity Ball 2021

The Board noted and approved the Memorandum from the Secretary to the College, dated 19 February 2020.

BD/19-20/169 Higher Degrees

The Board noted Higher Degrees, approved by the sub-committee of Board and Council on 12 February 2020 subject to amendments to the names of some of the universities involved.

BD/19-20/170 Related Entity Financial Reporting

The Board noted the memorandum from the Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer dated 18 February 2020.

BD/19-20/171 Dates of Board/Council for 2020/21

The Board noted and approved the memorandum from the Secretary to the College dated 19 February 2020.

SECTION D

In compliance with the Data Protection Acts this information is restricted.